

Diocese settles with man molested by priest

BY STAFF WRITER
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The Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester has offered to pay for five years of counseling costs under a tentative agreement reached Wednesday with a man who was molested by a priest.

The deal has not yet been signed, but Albany

lawyer John Aretakis said his client, Paul Hearty, will accept it.

The Rev. William Lum pleaded guilty in 1997 to third-degree sexual abuse, a misdemeanor. He admitted that in 1992 he molested Hearty, who then was 16, in the rectory of Our Lady of Mercy Church in Greece. Lum was given a conditional



The Rev. William Lum
admitted in 1997 that he molested boy, 16, in Greece.

discharge and ordered to stay away from Hearty.

In February, a state appellate court dismissed

Hearty's lawsuit against the diocese.

Nonetheless, diocesan officials said they offered the money in an effort to help Hearty continue to receive counseling.

"This is something we didn't have to do," said diocesan spokesman Michael Tedesco.

Aretakis described the settlement as more than a

couple of years worth of counseling but far less than "six figures."

He said Hearty was "not that happy about it."

"My client has been relatively destitute for various reasons, including this sexual abuse," Aretakis said.

"I don't know if he's going to have the luxury of using this for counseling."

The money would be spread out over five years.

The appellate court allowed Hearty's suit against Lum to continue, and the court was expected to set a trial date in the case next week.

Aretakis said his client would drop the case against Lum as part of the agreement with the diocese. □